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TORREYA

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HERBARIUM SUGGESTIONS

BY EDWARD L. MORRIS

This article is presented not with the idea of establishing anything specially new to those interested in herbarium work and equipment, but with the hope that the solutions suggested will answer some of the problems which many of us have run across from time to time.

Nearly everyone who has consulted American herbaria has noticed the enormous pigeon hole boards, indicating the contents of the herbarium, usually arranged by families. These large boards, if made of the size of the pigeon hole and hanging from the top of a full package, are awkward, unsightly, and have the disadvantage of being heavy, if made strong enough to stand wear and tear. We have also witnessed the other extreme, in some herbaria, by finding nothing whatever to indicate the contents of this or that tier of spaces in the cases; or, if such indication were fastened on the outside of the case, experience has often taught us that the location of such signs has not kept progress with the growth and redistribution of the covers in the series of pigeon holes.

Figure 1 indicates a very mild form of overhanging tags to show the location and sequence of plant families. The main difficulty is the readiness with which these tags are torn off, if fastened, or drop out, if merely slipped into the first genus cover. Uniformity is highly desirable, and when a system of family boards is once installed, the space allotted to such installation will remain constant.

Figure 2 is submitted with the suggestion that each family board takes little space, is of light weight and, in the use of the

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storage case, is sufficiently readable to meet any demand. The entire series of class, order, and family names has been printed on

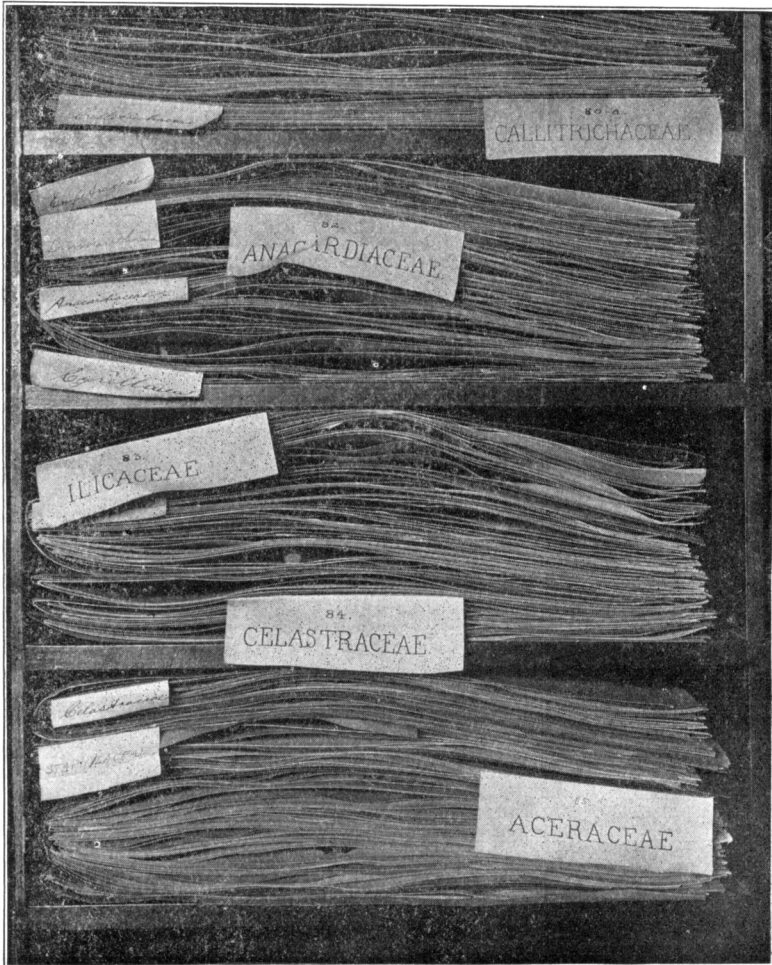


FIG. 1. Old style of Order and Family tabs.

Courtesy of Central Museum of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences.

large sheets, so spaced that with the ordinary form of "compo board" the printing occupies the proper space on the edge of a $16\frac{1}{2} \times 11\frac{1}{2}$ inch sheet of compo board. Experience with us

has shown that only the utmost carelessness on the part of a visiting student will result in the displacing of one of these boards from its proper location at the beginning of a family.

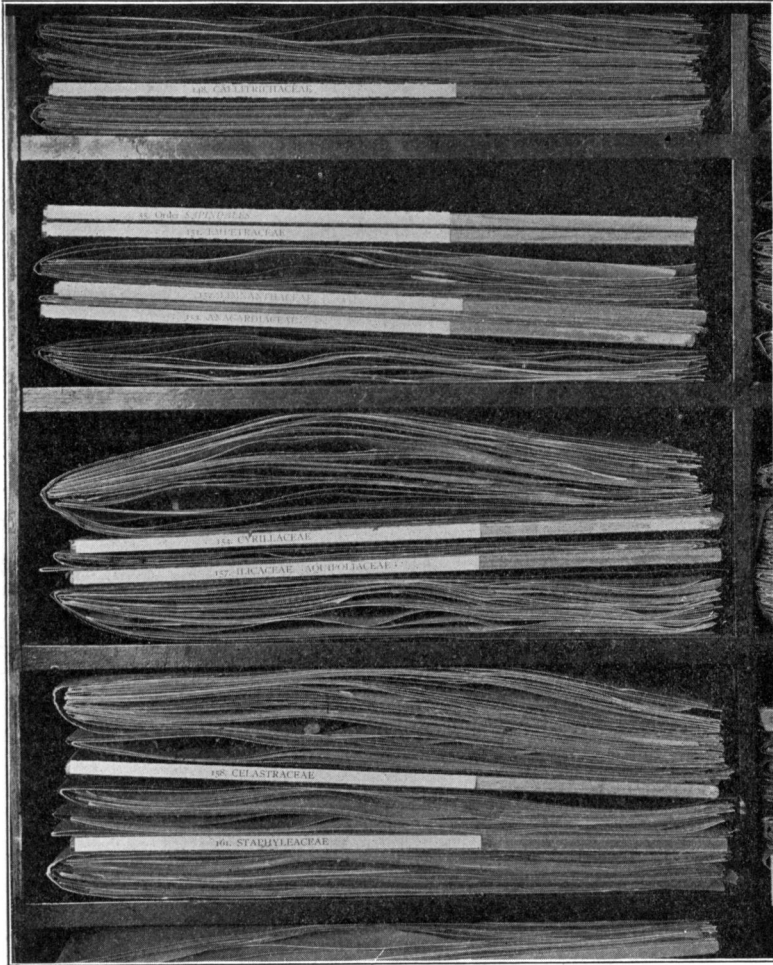
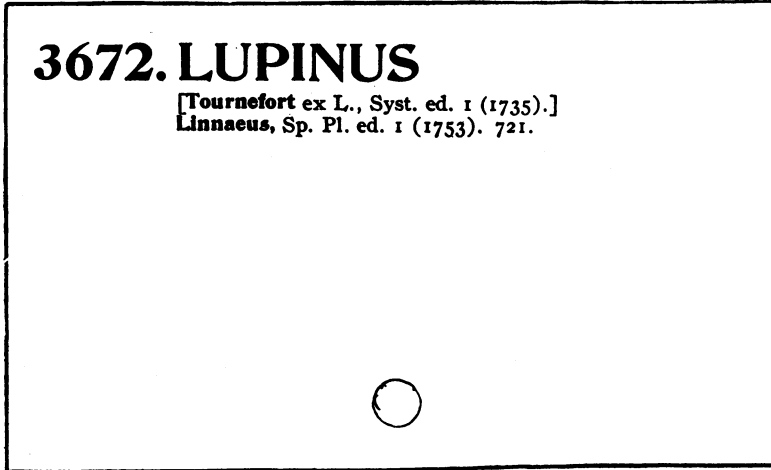


FIG. 2. Uniform Order and Family Boards.

Courtesy of Central Museum of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences.

Under the old system of large hanging signs, if several families consisting of only a few species, appear in the same pigeon hole their names must be presented in series on one end board, or

on a sufficient number of tags to require their being placed in alternating positions. The compo board sheets, as suggested in



Catalog card, reduced from the regular 75×125 mm. size.

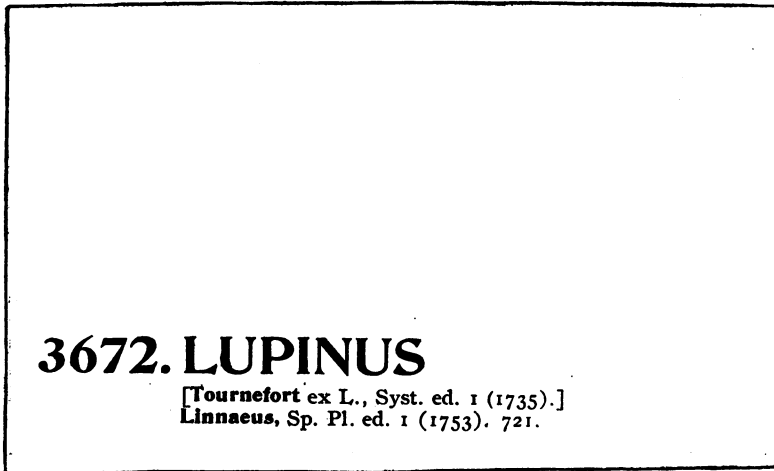


FIG. 3. Genus cover slip, reduced from 75×125 mm.

Courtesy of Central Museum of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences.

Figure 2, will give all the family names in one vertical arrangement.

Genus covers are often entered in so many handwritings that their records are confusing, or at least trying. Uniform cards, arranged alphabetically in a catalog, give ready reference by the sequence number to the sequence itself in the proper family, that number and genus name being readily seen and recognized if the genus label is placed at the lower left hand corner.

Figure 3 is presented with sample reprints of a legible and durable catalog card and its genus cover slip duplicate. The mere matter of the card being printed at the top, and the slip being printed at the bottom, for more ready reference in their respective places, is but a matter of slight ingenuity on the part of any capable printer in adjusting two sets of guides on his platen so that both sets may be printed without removing the locked form from the press. The difference in thickness of card and slip is, of course, obviated by the proper make-ready on the platen. It often happens that herbaria, even those of a private nature, specialize in some local range or limitation. The ordinary buff genus cover does not require any discussion. Local species may be well distinguished from those of more general range by placing them in a genus cover of different color which may be placed immediately above the regulation buff one. "Red rope paper" is suggested as durable and suitable for such local indication and will wear as well as the ordinary buff tag board.

The writer will be very glad, through the generosity of the Central Museum of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences, to furnish sample copies of the family lists, and representative genus cards and slips to those who have the intention of incorporating such a system for the more convenient use of their herbaria.

CENTRAL MUSEUM OF THE BROOKLYN INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES,
BROOKLYN, N. Y.